

**EdBlast! — All
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Message from the State Superintendent of Education

This is one of my most favorite times of the year. The holidays can also be a sad time—especially when we lose a friend or family member around Christmas. That is what happened to public education this week. We lost one of our staunchest supporters.

Charles H. Dickerson had a stellar career that began thirty-nine years ago at The R.L. Bryan Company, where he served in many capacities, including chairman and Chief Executive Officer. He will be remembered as an astute businessman who placed values before economics. His love for South Carolina and the Columbia community was evident through his life-long commitment to service.

Although Charlie never taught, teaching was one of his passions. He recognized that teachers make a positive difference in the lives of children every day and always embraced the opportunity to honor those on public education's frontlines. For nearly thirty years, he supported the State Teacher of the Year Program, helping to grow the program into what it is today. He established and led the Palmetto Horizon Foundation, the private group formed to honor South Carolina's teachers of the year.

Charlie understood that business and industry involvement in public education is vital if teachers are to build a strong foundation upon which South Carolina's students can learn, grow, and become contributing members of society. Many of the members of South Carolina's business partners are involved in public education because of Charlie's influence.

During the holidays, our thoughts turn to the people for whom we are most grateful. I am fortunate that Charlie was my friend and a public education ally. As many of you begin to make preparations for the winter holiday break, please know how appreciative I am for you too. Because of your efforts, my service over the past eight years has been a great joy.

I wish you the best holiday season ever and a happy and prosperous 2007.

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End of course results released

South Carolina students maintained a solid C in algebra and improved their physical science and English 1 scores last year on end-of-course testing mandated by the state's Education Accountability Act of 1998. For the results, go to:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/news/more.cfm?articleID=715>

Education department releases local advanced placement and IB scores

The State Department of Education recently released school-level results on 2006 college Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams.

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/news/more.cfm?articleID=714>

January is School Board Recognition month

January is School Board Recognition Month. The observance focuses attention on the vital role these elected or appointed public officials play in the education of our children. This year's theme is "School Boards: Leading Voices for South Carolina Public Schools." For recognition ideas, contact Debbie Elmore (delmore@scsba.org) at 800-326-3679.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program funds available

Federal funding is now available through the 2007 Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program to help with implementation of measures designed to reduce the negative impacts of natural hazards on local communities. School districts are among those eligible to apply. For

more information, contact Thomas F. Queen (tqueen@emd.state.sc.us) at the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (803-737-8500) or visit these sites:

http://search.fema.gov/search?q=Pre+disaster+mitigation+program&btnG=+Go+&sort=date%3AD%3AL%3Ad1&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&client=fema&proxystylesheet=fema&site=fema

http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pdm/fy07_changes.shtm

Princeton University holding summer journalism program

Students who will be high school juniors and seniors next fall are invited to get a taste of what university life is like at Princeton University this summer. The ten day all-expenses-paid summer journalism program will be held in August for students from under-resourced financial backgrounds. Applications must be postmarked by February 15, 2007. Application materials are available at:

<http://www.princeton.edu/~sjp/>

Google enrolls teachers in on-line software crusade

Google, Inc., is promoting free software to teachers who often lack the money and expertise to introduce more technological tools into their classrooms. For more information, go to:

<http://www.google.com/educators/index.html>

Palmetto Teachers Association sponsoring National Board Bankers seminar

The Palmetto State Teachers Association is sponsoring a National Board Bankers Seminar on Saturday, January 27, 2007, in Columbia from 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. The registration fee is \$30 for PSTA members and \$60 for nonmembers, including lunch. For more information or to register, contact Bev Barbee (bevbarbee@palmettoteachers.org) at 803.256.2065. To register, go to:

<http://palmettoteachers.org>

Safety information surrounding rail crossings available

Many children will read and view the story of “The Polar Express” this holiday season. The story is about a fantasy train, and many of the scenes in the movie show behavior that would be unsafe around real railroad property and trains. Operation Lifesaver, a national safety organization, has railroad safety information and classroom lessons that integrate math, science, and language arts. For access to teacher resources, visit:

<http://www.oli.org/>

State Higher Education Commission adopts new requirements

The Commission on Higher Education has adopted new college prerequisite course requirements that will be effective for freshmen entering four-year colleges in 2011 and beyond. The main changes include an additional unit in math (from 3 to 4), a unit in the fine arts, and only one elective unit (instead of four). The requirements can be viewed at:

http://www.che.sc.gov/New_Web/GoingToCollege/CollPrepPrereq.htm

State Department sponsors crisis management workshop

Dr. Mark Lerner, chairman of the National Center for Crisis Management and president of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, will present a workshop entitled “Managing School-Based Crises” on January 18, 2007, at the South Carolina Department of History and Archives. Lerner is a clinical and school psychologist, author, speaker, and traumatic stress consultant. Registration, which includes a copy of “A Practical Guide for Crisis Response in Our Schools,” is \$50. For an additional fee, participants may take the examination for board certification in school crisis response. Recertification credit is also available. Contact Sally Barefoot (sbarefoot@ed.sc.gov) at 803-734-8304 for more information.

Object of History is teacher resource

Each month The Object of History features an artifact from the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History’s collections related to a major topic in U.S. history. The site includes curriculum materials and opportunities for students to participate in live online forums with Smithsonian curators and historians. Teacher materials include lesson plans and other resources to support instruction. For more information, e-mail teachers@objectofhistory.org or visit:

<http://objectofhistory.org/>

International poetry and art contest open

River of Words, an international poetry and art contest focusing on watersheds, is open to students ages 5 to 19. The competition is designed to help youth explore the natural and cultural history of the place in which they live, and to express, through poetry and art, what they discover. The deadline for entries for River of Words is Feb. 15. Students may enter on their own or as part of a group. For more information, visit:

<http://www.riverofwords.org/>

<http://www.sccenterforthebook.org/>

Passports requirements extended

Students, teachers, and chaperones traveling by air will be required to carry a valid U.S. passport to reenter the United States starting January. 8, 2007, according to a new regulation issued by the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and State. The plan, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), adds Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean, and Bermuda to locations requiring a passport or selected other documents. Information about obtaining passports can be found by calling the National Passport Information Center at 877-487-2778 or by visiting:

<http://www.state.gov>

Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award accepting applications

The Astronauts Memorial Foundation Alan Shepard Technology in Education Award rewards excellence in the development and delivery of technology programs in the classroom with students or in the professional development of teachers. Educators in grades K-12 and district-level personnel are eligible to apply. The deadline is January 31, 2007. For more information, go to:

http://www.amfcse.org/Alan%20Shepard%20Award/alan_shepard_award.htm

Michelin Convention offers students opportunity

The 9th annual Michelin North America 2007 Invention Convention is an opportunity for 4th – 8th grade students. The event will be held February 5-6, 2007, at the Bi-Lo Center in Greenville. The object of the convention is to challenge the imagination, innovation, and creativity of students in the development of solutions to everyday issues. The deadline for registrations is January 28. For additional information, contact Katie Joner (KatieJoner@clearchannel.com) at 864-271-5150.

Roper Mountain Science Center sponsors P.L.U.S. Institute

Roper Mountain Science Center is again sponsoring the Science P.L.U.S. Institute for the state's public school science teachers. In its 15th year, the institute helps to promote hands-on, standards-based science instruction in grades 1-8. Each participant receives science classroom materials worth at least \$500. For more information, call 864-355-8920, or visit:

<http://ropermountain.org>

Donate Life South Carolina sponsors poster contest

The Paula Moore Dillingham Memorial Poster Contest promotes organ and tissue donation in South Carolina. Sponsored by Donate Life South Carolina for elementary, middle, and high school students, the contest offers students and teachers a positive

experience along with raising awareness about this issue. The deadline is March 2, 2007. For more information about the contest, including entry rules, call 877-277-4866, e-mail smcadams@donatelifesc.org, or visit:

<http://donatelifesc.org>

Courtyard by Marriott sponsors teacher appreciation packages

Courtyard by Marriott is saying thank you this holiday season by offering special discount packages to teachers, administrators, and school support staff. For more information, call 843-445-6333 or use corporate code TCH at:

<http://www.marriott.com/myrcv>

University of Iowa offers special graduate assistantships

The College of Education at the University of Iowa has special assistantships in education available to persons wanting to pursue graduate degrees in several fields of study. The stipends are \$16,730. The deadline is March 2, 2007. For more information, write: Chair, SGA Selection Committee, University of Iowa, 340 Lindquist Center, Iowa City, IA 52242-1529.

Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities offers several programs

The Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities offers several programs in creative writing, drama, music, and visual arts. Offerings range from intensive two-week programs for rising ninth graders and tenth graders to a summer dance program and teacher institutes. For more information, e-mail admissions@scgsah.state.sc.us or visit:

<http://www.scgsah.state.sc.us/index.php>

South Carolina Assistive Technology Expo 2007 set

The South Carolina Assistive Technology Expo 2007 will be held Thursday, March 29, 2007, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. This event will include exhibits and workshops about the latest assistive technology for people with disabilities and age-related limitations. It is free and open to the public, and no pre-registration is necessary. To make suggestions and for more information, contact Mary Alice Bechtler (maryab@cdd.sc.edu) or Janet Jendron (jjendron@usit.net) or visit:

<http://www.sc.edu/scatp/atexpo07.html>

Charleston County councilman is December's calendar feature

Frank Washington was one of the State Department of Education's first African-American administrators. It was through that position that Washington witnessed the

wide-spread inequity in the South Carolina's public education system. To read more about this trailblazer, go to:

<http://scafam-hist.org/currenthonoree.asp?month=12&year=2006>

This issue's quotation

“Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man.” ~~~ Benjamin Franklin

EdBlast! welcomes submissions

Do you need help in publicizing an education news item that would be of interest to a statewide audience? Send your information to jfairnot@ed.sc.gov or call Janice Larrymore Fairnot, EdBlast! editor, at 803-734-8999.

Spread the word about EdBlast!

We need your help in spreading the word about EdBlast!, the State Department of Education's e-newsletter. Here's the sign-up link:

<http://ed.sc.gov/tools/edblast/>

Thanks for sharing!